

Nancy Johnson



Fifth District, Connecticut

www.house.gov/nancyjohnson

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Contact: Brian Schubert

(202) 225-4476

Seniors Honor Johnson for Leadership on Medicare Law *Rep. Johnson Receives Medicare Choices Leadership Award*

NEW BRITAIN, CT – Congresswoman Nancy Johnson was honored for her work to add prescription drug benefits to Medicare and strengthen Medicare Advantage plans today by the Coalition for Medicare Choices.

Jack Ring of Southbury, a member of the Coalition, presented Johnson with the Medicare Choices Leadership Award in New Britain today.

“Passing the Medicare law was one of my top priorities in Congress,” Johnson said. “The law represents the largest expansion and improvement of Medicare since it was founded almost 40 years ago. It is already savings seniors money on prescription drugs and boosting the quality of care they receive. I thank the Coalition for Medicare Choices for joining me in this team effort to improve Medicare for America’s seniors.”

The award recognized Johnson for her leadership in passing the Medicare prescription drug law. The law added drug coverage and preventive benefits to Medicare, as well as immediate support for improving health plan benefits and reducing the out-of-pocket costs for seniors enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) reports that Medicare Advantage plans saw payments increase by 10.6 percent in March 2004. CMS said that plans are using the additional funds as follows:

- 42 percent of the funds are being used to strengthen provider networks to ensure that beneficiaries continue to have *more choices of physicians*, specialists, and other healthcare providers;
- 31 percent of funds are being used to *reduce enrollee premiums*;
- 17 percent of funds are being used to *enhance existing benefits*;
- 5 percent of funds are being used to *reduce enrollee cost sharing*; and
- 5 percent of funds are being used to support plan stabilization funds for future years.

The Coalition for Medicare Choices is a rapidly growing organization of seniors advocating quality health care and expanded health choices for Medicare beneficiaries. Its 240,000 members live in 41 states and in more than 350 congressional districts.

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